UNITED STATES KARATE ALLIANC

BUSHIDO BULLETIN

May/June 2006 Volume 16 Issue 3

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FOUR NATIONALS CHAMPIONS RETAIN TITLES

by Rick Nathanson, 7th Dan

Sasha Jovanovic, who tied for Black Belt Grand Champion Kata with Greg Holmes in an unprecedented decision at last year's USKA Nationals, became the solo holder of that trophy at the 2006 Nationals held earlier this year at Albuquerque's Marriott Pyramid North Hotel. Mr. Holmes, who in addition was last year's Black Belt Grand Champion Weapons winner, held onto that title.

Anna Gorman won the Black Belt Women Grand Champion Kumite competition for an impressive sixth time, and 11-year-old tournament veteran Tori Summey retained the Junior Weapons Grand Champion title.

Other Alliance Cup trophies went to Scott Daniel Rossman for Adult Kyu Kata Grand Champion; Barry Barton for Adult Kyu Weapons Grand Champion; Amy Eggers for Junior Forms Beginning Grand Champion; and Josh Quayhagen for Black Belt Men Kumite Grand Champion.

Mr. Jovanovic, who turned 24 at the stroke of midnight after winning his trophy, ran "Supar Empi," the same kata both he and Mr. Holmes tied with last year. "I decided to stick with that kata for the sake of consistency," he said. "It's my favorite kata, it's very competitive as compared to other katas, and it's something different and unique that other people don't usually do. I didn't change anything from last year, but I did focus on my transitions and tried to make them more polished, and worked on my breath to raise my level of intensity a little more."

In addition, Mr. Jovanovic finished in third place in his middle-weight kumite division

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of "Matsuhiga No Tunfa." She broke the tie and won the trophy with "Shirotaru No Kun."

Amy Eggers

Also at Nationals, Ms. Summey, who studies Shuri Ryu under Mike Klier, won first places in Koshiki and team fighting, second place in Chanbara and musical kata (sister Keili took first in musical kata), and third place in kumite.

The youngest of the Nationals grand champion winners was 7-year-old Amy Eggers, who took home the Junior Forms Beginning honors. An orange belt at the Four Winds Center in Albuquerque, where she studies Gung Fu under Sifu David Brown, Amy performed "Chang Chuan," as her Sifu looked on. "It's easy and it's fun," said Amy, who added that she performed the same kata at the New Mexico State Tournament in Belen and won second place in her division. "She's a stellar student," said her smiling instructor. "She's very committed to what she does."

Scott Rossman

Shuri-Ryu stylist Scott Daniel Rossman, 20, performed "Bassai Dai" to win the Adult Kyu Forms Grand Champion. "It's the highest form I know and I felt it was my strongest kata," said the brown belt from Illinois who studies under Joe Walker at the Academy of Okinawan Karate in Peoria. "I've done pretty well with that kata in the past, and overall basics is where I've gotten strongest. So the middle blocks in the kata is where I focus for precision, but my favorite movement is the groin grab and the kiai point. It's a strong position, shows a good stance, and the hands are out there so it looks really sharp."

Mr. Rossman has placed consecutively for three years in kata at USKA World Championships, and last year he won grand champion. He also competes in some PKC tournaments as well. Mr. Rossman is a nursing student at Illinois Central College.

Barry Barton w/Susan Watts

For Barry Barton, karate is a family event. No doubt his 9-year-old son Austin and 6-year-old daughter Hannah were proud of their pop for becoming the Adult Kyu Weapons Grand Champion at Nationals. Mr. Barton won with "Bo 1," which he has been competing with for more than two years. "It's been tried and true for me in the past," said the 40-year-old CPA. This, however, was his first grand champion win, he said. Mr. Barton also took second place in kumite and won his kata division, but he was defeated in the finals.

Mr. Barton and his children study under Susan Watts and Eric Sullivan in Benton, La. Two years ago he won his kata division and took second in kumite at Nationals, while his son won first in kumite and second in kata.

For many, the most exciting, and certainly fastest-paced portion of finals was the fighting competition. At the end of the night, 19-year-old Josh Quayhagen from Leesville, La., held the Black Belt Men Kumite Grand Champion trophy. Quayhagen wowed the crowd with his display of lightning fast reflexes and flurry of techniques against two impressive opponents.

In his first match against eight-time Nationals kumite grand champion John Pat Bullock of Louisiana. He then defeated last year's winner Jeff Crothers of California.

"When you fight somebody like John Pat, somebody who is taller and has better reach, and somebody with his speed, you have to get inside his arm to jam him so he can't get full extension. You make it hard for him to score."

Mr. Quayhagen and Mr. Bullock also fought at last year's USKA World Championships, where Mr. Quayhagen outscored him. "It's a big deal for me because I grew up watching him fight," Mr.

at Nationals, and was on the third place team in the team fighting event. A Matsmura Seito Shorin Ryu styist and a San Dan, Mr. Jovanovic studies under Mike Wall in Arizona.

Sasha Jovanovic w/Bruce Heilman

Mr. Holmes, 40, performed "Tokumine Nokun Ni," which he won with last year, and a second kata, "Odo No Nunchaku."

Greg Holmes w/Bruce Heilman

For the bo kata, "I tried to relax more this year than last year so I could emphasize the power," he said. "The more you tighten up, the more restricted you are, so the less power you can generate." For the nunchaku kata, "since there are so many hand changes, it's difficult to perform cleanly and there's much room for error. So it's really a matter of just getting comfortable with the changes and repetition. I trained by doing reps of 100 of each hand change. I did them with my eyes open, eyes closed, every which way so it became second nature."

Anna Gorman w/James Hawkes

Mr. Holmes, who studies under Milt Calander, operates the Bushido Academy in Gilbert, Ariz., where he teaches Shuri Ryu karate, Okinawan Kenpo Kobudo, Brazilian jujitsu and yoga. He also works for the city of Phoenix as an auditor.

For the sixth time at Nationals, Anna Gorman of Albuquerque won the Black Belt Women Grand Champion fighting competition. She beat

School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, sang our National Anthem. Thank you, Rachael – you really made it shine.

We were fortunate to have several outstanding EMT's this year. Ralph Glassman came in from Arizona, Chris Springer came in from Louisiana, and Dr. Kathy Ulrich helped us out here locally. Being martial artists themselves, we find they give extra-special care.

The pictures in this issue were taken courtesy of Joe Wendt. Thank you for capturing some special moments during our finals and various other times during Nationals. We hope to have some more photos on our members-only portion of the website soon.

Our Chief Referee, Lee Kittell, our coordinators, Cassandra Shults and Dennis Crothers, our MC, Milt Calander, our arbitrators, Cathy Davis, Guy Holtzman, Eddie Bethea, Jr., and so many more – thank you for your time and expertise. Our Alliance Hall of Fame members in attendance did a great job of officiating, coordinating and keeping things moving. – Thank you all!

GREAT TIMES AWAIT US ALL IN DALLAS, TEXAS

What's in Dallas, Texas? Six Flags Over Texas, Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, great shopping and delicious food, but best of all – the 2006 U.S. Karate Alliance World Championships! Sure sounds like the makings of a great summer vacation this August!

Preparations are underway for the prestigious event at its latest location – the Hotel Intercontinental Dallas. Call now to reserve your room at the USKA World Championship Headquarters and receive your special rate. Just mention the 2006 U.S. Karate Alliance World Championships when you call 1-800-386-1592 before July 13th to receive the special rate. We are currently working hard to publish the point standings through the end of the point year. We hope to have another edition up in a couple of weeks. Please note, that we do continue to make corrections, so call or E-mail right away if something does not look right.

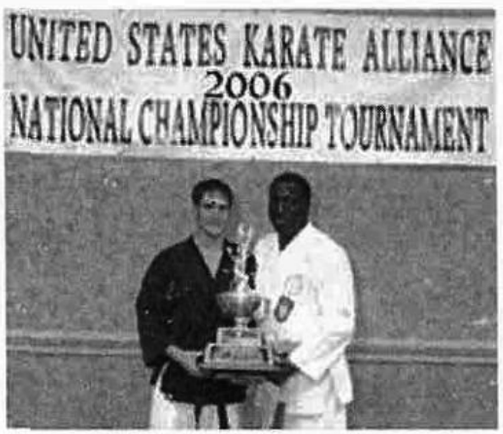
Are you interested in visiting Six Flags while in Dallas? VIP savings cards are available for discounts on various packages and admissions, if you would like to reserve one when you pre-register for the tournament. Just make a note and highlight it on your registration form. One card is good for up to six people.

The USKA World Championships are open to all martial artists of all styles. There is no qualification necessary, just come and enjoy the competition and comradarie with martial artists from all over! Don't forget to form your teams now for Team Sparring and Team Forms events!

Our next Bushido Bulletin will feature our Black Belt World Defending Grand Champions, so keep your eye out for it and them – they are exceptional.

Quayhagen said. "When I was a kid I used to say that I can't wait until I grow up and get to fight John Pat and win. I never actually thought it would happen."

Mr. Quayhagen had to change his strategy pretty quickly into the second match against Mr. Crothers. "I usually fight left profile and will maybe mix it up and fight from the right once or twice during a match, but mostly I fight left side forward," he said. "It's more of a defensive counterstrike thing. I like to rock back and punch with my right arm. Jeff pretty much had that figured out from the start, so I had to switch and use my speed and try to beat him to the punch."



Josh Quayhagen w/Eddie Bethea, Jr.

The strategy worked well for Mr. Quayhagen, who also competed in the team-fighting event and walked off with first place, along with teammates Teresa Davies and Adrian Galvan.

Mr. Quayhagen is a sophomore at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La., where he studies chemical engineering and business management.

THANK YOU!

We just wanted to take a moment to thank all those who helped to make the 2006 Nationals & Annual Seminar a great success. Each year, our numerous volunteers really help to make this event all possible. From our referees and judges, our scorekeepers and timekeepers, to our registration workers, everyone makes a difference. I wish we could name them all.

Our Color Guard came up from Belen High School to lead in the procession at our Finals and present our beautiful flags. Taylor Britton and Courtney Gular, students of Richard & Cindy Long at Belen Goju-Ryu, were two of the Color Guard participants. Following the Color Guard, leading in the procession of National Finalists, was Alliance Hall of Fame member, Tom Pisut holding the hand of our littlest finals competitor. It's always an exciting moment for both the competitors and their families when the finalists get to march in and be recognized.

Rachael Arthur, who just graduated from West Mesa High

Louisiana's Angelica Drexel and Albuquerque's Teresa Davies.

"Angelica is tricky and has good timing, said Ms. Gorman. "If you get a little sloppy she gets the drop on you. She also has a pretty good counter, so I had to switch to countering more and fighting my urge to be more aggressive. With Teresa, she's very fast and has good kicks and good combinations. I try to stay out of her range. Fortunately I have the advantage of my own range because I'm taller. I scored on her with a hook kick and I was very happy about that because it's hard to control and find a stopping point and then be able to bring the kick back."

Tori Summey

Ms. Gorman also was on the second place team for the team fighting event, and first place in the 1st and 2nd dan kata division with her performance of "Dannan Sho." She particularly enjoys the kata because of its use of an elbow-backfist combination. "The backfist is my favorite technique in sparring," she said.

Ms. Gorman, 27, studies with her husband, Mark Gorman, at the Mountain Eagle Shuri-Ryu Academy in Albuquerque, and are associated with Mr. Mike Klier of Arizona. She also works in human resources at Sandia National Laboratories.

The biggest challenge for Tori Summey was figuring out how to return to Arizona with the 14 trophies and two medals amassed by her and her sister, Keili. Among those trophies were two Alliance Cups for Tori's grand championship wins in the Junior Forms Advanced competition, and the Junior Weapons competition.

The 11-year-old brown belt performed "Go Pai Sho," the same empty hand kata she won with last year at Nationals. "That kata expresses the advantages of my low stances, and it has more of a yin-yang with the soft and hard techniques. I just really like performing the kata," said the articulate 6th grader. In the weapons finals she tied with friend Dylan Puhuyaoma for her version